The
DEMON
PRINCE
of MOMOCHI
HOUSE
4
Story & Art by
Aya Shouoto

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The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

Four-Leaf Clover and a Pinkie Promise

CHAPTER 12

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The Mysterious Residents of Momochi House

Aoi Nanamori

When he was 7 years old, he wandered into Momochi House and was chosen as the Omamori-sama. He transforms into a nue to perform his duties, but it seems this role was meant for Himari.

Omamori-sama (Nue)

An ayakashi, or demon, with the ears of a cat, the wings of a bird, and the tail of a fox. As the Omamori-sama, the nue protects Momochi House and eliminates demons who make their way in from the spiritual realm.

Ise

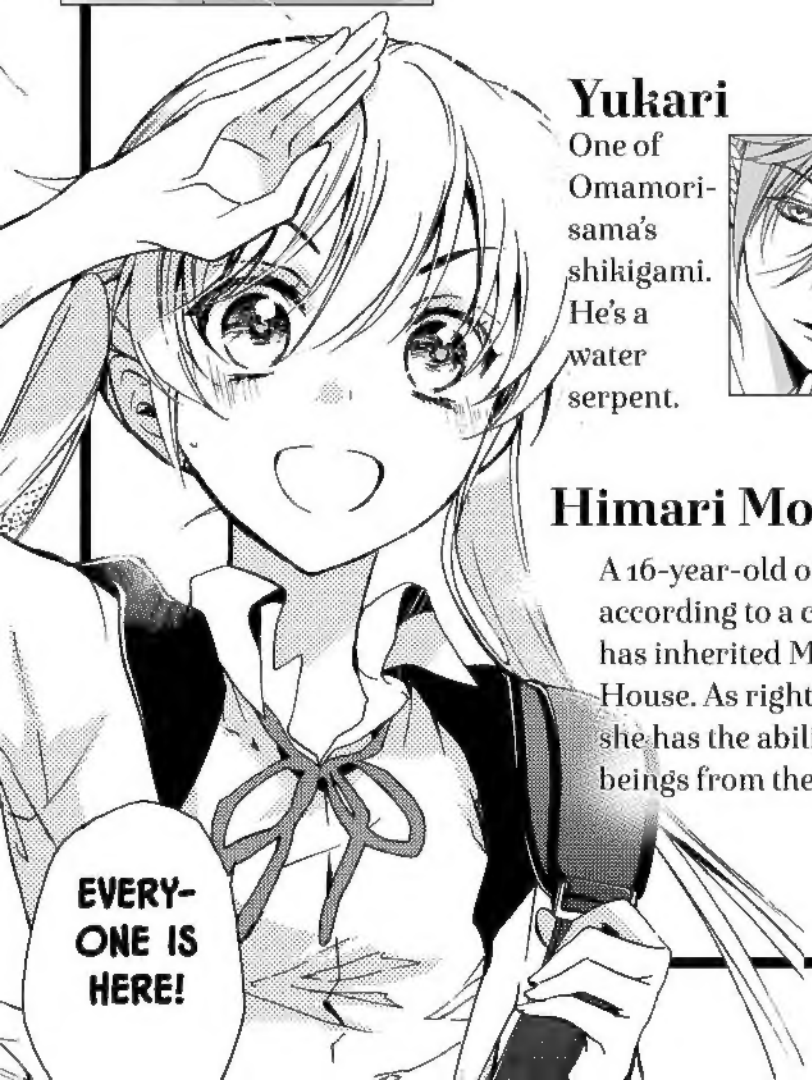
One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's an orangutan.

Yukari

One of Omamori-sama's shikigami. He's a water serpent.

Himari Momochi

A 16-year-old orphan who, according to a certain will, has inherited Momochi House. As rightful owner, she has the ability to expel beings from the house.



Lesser Yokai

Momochi House: Story Thus Far

Four of Himari's friends from school visit Momochi House. But a great demon by the name of Kasha has entered the house by pretending to be one of them. Kasha's appearance forces Aoi to the brink of becoming a true demon... Later, Aoi invites Himari to an area deep within Momochi House that she has never before seen. A great number of ayakashi are celebrating the Nue's Resealing Rite. The rite is successful and Himari and her friends go back to their normal lives. Aoi makes Himari a four-leaf clover ring as a token of thanks for aiding him. Himari happily wears the ring to school, but one boy has a strong reaction the instant he sees it...

WHO IS THIS PERSON?!

I RK,
IT WAS AO-
W-WELL EXCUSE ME FOR NOT FITTING THE TYPE!
WHO WAS IT?!
YOU DON'T LOOK THE TYPE.

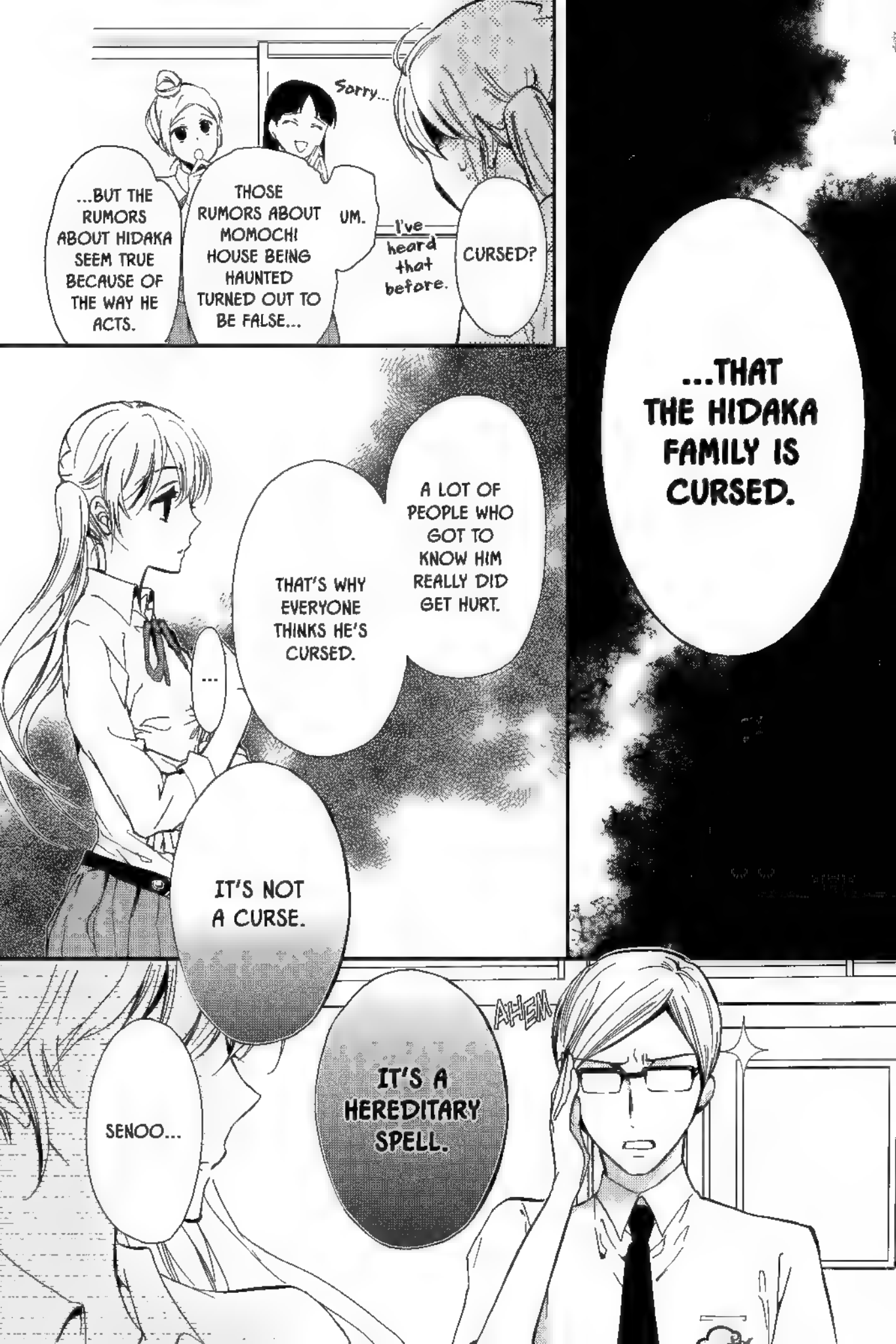
DID YOU MAKE IT?
HUH? OH, THIS...

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
A FAMILY MEMBER ...?
I MEAN, A FAMILY MEMBER MADE IT.

HIMARI MOMOCHI.
MOMOCHI.

MOMOCHI...
MOMOCHI ...
I DON'T KNOW THAT NAME.
IT DOESN'T RING A BELL.
OH
...WOULD YOU LET GO OF MY HAND?
IN THAT CASE...
...
SWIP
AH! HEY...
HE SUDDENLY APPEARED AND THEN LEFT...
DON'T LET IT BOTHER YOU, HIMARI.

HIDAKA...
HIDAKA HASN'T BEEN TO SCHOOL FOR A WHILE.
HE'S STILL ACTING ODDLY AS USUAL.
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT HAYATO HIDAKA, RIGHT?
HE COMES TO SCHOOL FOR A FEW DAYS WHEN HIS ATTENDANCE GETS TOO LOW.
AND HE ALWAYS SAYS WEIRD THINGS... HE'S KIND OF SCARY.
SCARY?
YEAH, THERE'S A RUMOR GOING AROUND...


Sorry...
UM.
I've heard that before.
CURSED?
THOSE RUMORS ABOUT MOMOCHI HOUSE BEING HAUNTED TURNED OUT TO BE FALSE...
...BUT THE RUMORS ABOUT HIDAKA SEEM TRUE BECAUSE OF THE WAY HE ACTS.
...THAT THE HIDAKA FAMILY IS CURSED.
A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO GOT TO KNOW HIM REALLY DID GET HURT.
THAT'S WHY EVERYONE THINKS HE'S CURSED.
...
IT'S NOT A CURSE.
AHEM
IT'S A HEREDITARY SPELL.
SENOO...

MY GRANDMA SAYS THE HIDAKA FAMILY...
...DESCENDED FROM FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS.
ULP
SO IT'S NOT TECHNICALLY A CURSE—
SHUT UP, YOU OCCULT FREAK!
FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS...
HAYATO HIDAKA...
HE CERTAINLY HAS A STRANGE AIR ABOUT HIM.
THAT GIRL...
...IS INTERESTING...

VERY INTER-ESTING...
WFF
TMP
TMP
I DON'T THINK ANYONE BESIDES AOI COULD MAKE THIS IN SUCH A DISTINCT WAY.
DID HIDAKA REACT TO IT BECAUSE HE KNOWS AOI?
HM.
DOES IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH AYAKASHI?
I HOPE HE'S NOT ANOTHER ONE OF AOI'S ANNOYING ACQUAIN-TANCES...
I WONDER IF TALKING TO AOI WILL SHED ANY LIGHT ON THIS.
OR...
TMP
TMP
HEH
...WILL HE JUST CHANGE THE SUBJECT LIKE USUAL?
HEH
OH

HUH?
WHERE AM I?
ACK!
"I WAS ALMOST HOME"...
SWIFT
"WHERE AM I?"
HEH HEH
TMP
HE CAN READ MY MIND?

LET ME OUT OF HERE!
ONLY IF...
AN AYAKASHI!
YOU'RE LOST, HUH...
YOU CAN'T GET HOME
HEH HEH
WHAT? THIS FOUR-LEAF CLOVER?
...YOU GIVE ME WHAT'S ON YOUR FINGER.
BUT...
NO, IT HAS TO BE THAT RING.
YOU CAN'T HAVE THIS. CHOOSE SOMETHING ELSE...
THE RING AGAIN.

...AOI GAVE THIS TO ME...
KRSSH
HIMARI?
...
OH
SOME-ONE'S INTER-FERING...
I HEAR SOME-ONE!
I GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE
I'LL BE BACK FOR IT...
IT'S A PROMISE.
WOOSH

I'M ON THE PATH AGAIN.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
AH...
THUD
HIMARI!
WHY WERE YOU ZONING OUT IN FRONT OF THE GATE?
YEN
RUSH
GYAAAH
WHY ARE YOU NAKED AGAIN?!
YOU MADE A PROMISE WITH AN AYAKASHI?

...
I DIDN'T MEAN TO, BUT...
HE LED YOU INTO THE SPIRITUAL REALM, RIGHT?
THE SPIRITUAL REALM WHERE AYAKASHI LIVE...
I WENT TO GREET HIMARI AT THE GATE IN THIS FORM...
...AND SHE GREETED ME WITH VIOLENCE!
Listen to this!
THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE...
HIMARI DOESN'T LIKE NUDITY.
YOU DID WELL, ZUSHI.
THAT AYAKASHI MIGHT FOLLOW HER AROUND FOR A WHILE.
YUKARI, BRING THAT OUT.
He praised me!
YES.

I MADE MY OWN SPECIAL MODIFI-CATIONS.
WHAT IS THIS?
MY SMART PHONE THAT EXPLODED?
THIS IS FOR YOU, HIMARI.
I CAN'T ALWAYS BE WITH YOU...
...SO WHENEVER YOU'RE IN DANGER, CALL ME AND I'LL SEND A SHIKIGAMI.

WOOD
BUT DOES THIS EVEN WORK?
I'M SO HAPPY AOI DID THIS FOR ME...
THANK YOU...
MOVED

Amazing
OH, I USE THIS LESSER YOKAI.
OH!
HELLO, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
Aoi
WHOA
YOUR VOICE!
WOW!
An ayakashi cell phone!
NOW THEN...
THE PROBLEM IS THE PROMISE YOU MADE WITH THAT MASKED AYAKASHI.
I'M SURE HE'LL COME FOR THAT RING AGAIN.
HE PROBABLY THINKS IT WILL BOOST HIS POWERS BECAUSE AOI MADE IT.
DO YOU SUPPOSE IT'S SOME LESSER YOKAI PULLING A PRANK ON HER?
UH...
What a pain.
JUST GIVE IT TO HIM.

GEH...
Why do I have to do this?
ISE, LOOK FOR A FOUR-LEAF CLOVER. ZUSHI, HELP ME COOK SOME RICE.
I'LL HELP!
LET'S MAKE ANOTHER RING AND LEAVE IT WITH SOME INARIZUSHI OUTSIDE THE GATE.
YUKARI...

*_Inarizushi_ is a pouch made of fried tofu filled with rice. Inari, the Shinto fox god, is said to be fond of them.

A FAMILY DESCENDED FROM FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS...
A MASKED AYAKASHI...
IS HE CONTROLLING THAT AYAKASHI?
...AT SCHOOL...
AH...
THERE WAS ANOTHER PERSON WHO WAS INTERESTED IN THIS RING...

AOI.
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE NAMED HAYATO HIDAKA?

AO-
YEAH.
I DO.
HE WAS A CHILDHOOD FRIEND.

"WAS"?
HE SIMPLY TOLD ME.
WHAT?
YES.
HE DOESN'T REMEMBER ME ANYMORE.

AH...
WHEN AOI BECAME THE OMAMORI-SAMA, HIS EXISTENCE WAS ERASED FROM THE HUMAN WORLD.
EVERYONE HAS FORGOTTEN HIM.
BUT AOI...
...REMEMBERS THEM.
AOI...
IF THERE'S SOME-ONE...
...WHO REMEMBERS YOU—
DOESN'T HE WANT TO MEET HIM?

THAT'S ALL IN THE PAST.
HEH
WE LIVE IN DIFFERENT WORLDS.

FOR A SECOND HIS EXPRESSION CHANGED, THEN...
...REJECTION.
I COULD ALMOST HEAR HIM SAYING...
...NOT TO DO ANYTHING UNNECESSARY.
A MASKED AYAKASHI WHO WANTS MY RING...
A FAMILY DESCENDED FROM FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS...
AOI'S CHILDHOOD FRIEND...
IS HAYATO HIDAKA INVOLVED SOMEHOW?
SIGH
ALL THIS THINKING IS KEEPING ME AWAKE.
OH
VOOM
A FOX?!

KLAK
I'M SURE HE'LL COME FOR THAT RING AGAIN.
AAH!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

WAS HE THE NUE FOR AN INSTANT?
...
HUH? AOI?
ARE YOU HALF-ASLEEP? WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?
OH... IT'S NOTHING.
WHY ARE YOU UP SO LATE?
AOI...
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU, SO I THOUGHT I WOULD SLEEP NEXT TO YOU.
GRAB
...
BUT I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
SHOVE SHOVE
THAT'S YOUR USUAL PATTERN!
I'm not falling for it!

HIMARI?

WE LIVE IN DIFFERENT WORLDS.

KLAK
GOOD NIGHT.
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT, AOI.
I'LL STAY WITH YOU.

WOW!
IS THAT HUNK OF METAL AN AYAKASHI?! SO COOL!
THIS HAS A MOUTH. IS THIS AN AYAKASHI TOO?!
MORE IMPORTANTLY ...
BAM
WHY ARE YOU COMING WITH ME TO SCHOOL?!
AOI TOLD ME TO.
HE WAS WORRIED SOMETHING MIGHT HAPPEN AGAIN, SO HE ORDERED ME TO PROTECT YOU!
NO ONE TOUCHED THE RING WE LEFT OUTSIDE THE GATE LAST NIGHT...
...WHICH MEANS HE ONLY WANTS YOURS.
...
BUT I'M MORE WORRIED WITH YOU AROUND...
OH, IS THIS AN AYAKASHI TOO?!
TWIRL
MY POINT EXACTLY!

HERE GOES NOTH-ING!
UM...
...
GOOD MORNING, HIDAKA.
OH.
TMP
YOU ASKED ME ABOUT MY RING YESTERDAY.
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR THE PERSON WHO MADE IT?
B-BUP
B-BUP

TAP
TAP
...
SORRY, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ME.
IF YOU HANG AROUND ME, YOU'LL BE CURSED, YOU KNOW?
SMIRK
WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM?

FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS?
THAT'S RIDICU-LOUS.
WELL...
DO YOU KNOW ANY-THING ABOUT FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS? MAYBE HE HAS THAT POWER.
WHO DOES THAT HUMAN THINK HE IS?
HE'S GOING TO CURSE A MEMBER OF THE MOMOCHI FAMILY?
I DON'T SENSE HE HAS ANY AYAKASHI POWER.
FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS ARE DESCENDANTS OF THOSE WHO CAN CONTROL FOX SPIRITS.
BUT...
THEN...

DONG
DONG
DONG
DONG
I HEARD A KID EVEN DIED BECAUSE OF THE CURSE.
SOMEONE'S REMARKS JUST SORT OF SPREAD.
...BECAUSE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY WOULD KEEP GETTING SICK AND OTHER KIDS HE HAD ARGUMENTS WITH WOULD GET HURT.
PEOPLE STARTED SAYING HE WAS CURSED...

NOW HE'S A TOTAL MISANTHROPE... PEOPLE SURE CHANGE.
...SAID HE WAS CHEERFUL AND ENERGETIC.
THOSE WHO KNEW HIDAKA WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER...

SW
F
F

I KNOW!
HIMARI, SOMETHING IS FOLLOWING US!
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
SW
F
F
HUFF
HUFF

...
IT'S CAUGHT UP TO US, HIMARI!
HIDAKA ISN'T DOING THIS!
IT'S PROB-ABLY...
DASH!
I WANT YOU TO FULFILL YOUR PROMISE.
AH! WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

I'M INTER-ESTED IN THAT RING...
I WANT IT.
SHUP
YOU PROM-ISED, REMEM-BER?
I'M TAKING YOUR PINKIE.
AOI!

Argh...
Argh...
Argh...
Argh...
THUD
THUD
Aoi

TELL ME.
HIDAKA
WHY ARE YOU DOING BAD THINGS TO PEOPLE WHO GET INVOLVED WITH HIDAKA?
IT ISN'T WHAT HIDAKA WANTS...
IT WORKED!
You did it, wooden smart phone!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, HIMARI?
YES, I'M FINE. THANKS, AOI.
DON'T DO ANYTHING RECK-LESS
...BUT THIS THING IS CURSING PEOPLE.
HEH HEH...

THEY NEED TO BE CURSED!
THE HIDAKA FAMILY ARE AT FAULT FOR NEGLECTING US...
VISH
THEY NEED TO SUFFER MORE!
HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH
DASH

AH...!
THERE'S NO NEED TO GO AFTER HIM, HIMARI.
AOI!
TMP

HIDAKA IS SUFFERING...
...BECAUSE OF AN AYAKASHI...
...AOI.
YES.
SHE
BUT...

AOI'S HAND...
YES...
...YOU'RE BEING TOO RECKLESS.
IT MAKES ME FEEL AT EASE.
HIMARI...
AH, THAT'S FINE THEN.
HUH?! I COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING.
I didn't have a chance to look!
YUP
DID YOU SEE THE AYAKASHI'S FACE UNDER THAT MASK?

THAT'S FOR THE BEST.

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER 13
BYE-BYE!
SEE YOU!
THAT WAS AMAZING.
KLANK
RAAH
RAAH
KICK THE CAN!
HA HA HA
THAT CAN WENT FLYING!
YOU DISTRACTED THE GUY WHO WAS "IT"...
...SO I COULD SNEAK PAST HIM!
WE REALLY ARE INVINCIBLE...

...RIGHT?
IS THIS A MEMORY FROM CHILD-HOOD...
AGAIN ...
AND AGAIN ...
...

Sunset Fox:
Part 1
CHAPTER
13
...OR
JUST A
DREAM?

...
HIDAKA IS SUFFERING BECAUSE OF THAT AYAKASHI...
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO SAVE HIM?
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT, HIMARI?
HUH?

I CAN'T GO MEET HIM.
THERE ISN'T MUCH I CAN DO.

HIMARI...
WHY DON'T WE INVITE HIDAKA TO MOMOCHI HOUSE? YOU TWO WILL BE ABLE TO MEET THEN.
I KNOW!
AOI?
BUT...

I'M GOING. DON'T WORRY, I WON'T BE HELD BACK A YEAR.
ARE YOU GOING TO SCHOOL? LISTEN...
HAYATO?
TMP TMP TMP
...
?
KREE
NO, SOMEONE IS OUTSIDE...
HELLO! LET'S WALK TO SCHOOL TOGETHER!

SINCE WE BOTH WALK IN THE SAME DIREC-TION.
...
IT'S TOUGH WALKING TO SCHOOL FROM THE MOUNTAINS, ISN'T IT?
I TOLD YOU NOT TO HANG AROUND ME.
BECAUSE I'LL BE CURSED?
THAT DOESN'T BOTHER ME AT ALL! I'LL BE FINE!
POIK
CHARMS WON'T HELP...
HIDAKA.
I KNOW BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO PEOPLE WHO GET INVOLVED WITH YOU.
THAT'S WHY YOU GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO AVOID EVERYONE.
...
FWASH

VOON
HIDAKA
THESE ARE...
HE DROPPED THESE.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I WAS A LITTLE SCARED, BUT I'M FINE.
YESTERDAY, I WAS CHASED BY A MASKED CHILD.
...MY SCIS-SORS?!

HIDAKA IS BEGINNING TO UNDER-STAND.
BUT I SENSED SOMETHING WAS THERE...
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM.
HE'S AN AYAKASHI, RIGHT?

LEAVE ME ALONE!
LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS CURSE!
YOU SHOULDN'T LET THAT MASKED AYAKASHI HAVE HIS WAY ANY LONGER.
A DEAL?
I'M TO BLAME FOR THIS HAPPENING.
...
I MADE A DEAL WITH HIM!
I CAN'T IGNORE THIS.
I'M ALREADY INVOLVED NOW.
SWIFF
THAT MASKED AYAKASHI WILL RETURN.
...

TALK TO ME.
LET'S SOLVE THIS TOGETHER.
PLEASE.
DON'T FACE THIS ALL ALONE.

THERE'S NOTHING MUCH TO TELL...
IT'S A SILLY STORY.
IT'S RUMORED MY FAMILY COMES FROM A LINE OF FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS.
BUT WE'RE REALLY ORDINARY.
WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I HAD A CHILDHOOD FRIEND I WAS REALLY CLOSE TO.
I KNEW MY MOTHER PLACED OFFERINGS THERE EVERY MORNING.
BUT WE HAD A SMALL SHRINE IN THE BACK-YARD
MY DAD WAS JUST A WHITE-COLLAR WORKER...
...AND I'VE NEVER SENSED ANYTHING SPIRITUAL.

HE WAS REALLY SMART...
...AND OUR PERSON-ALITIES WERE DIFFERENT ...
...BUT WE GOT ALONG REALLY WELL.
I CAN'T REMEMBER HIS FACE OR HIS NAME.
...I THINK I DID.
OR RATHER ...

WHEN WE TEAMED UP...
...NO ONE STOOD A CHANCE AGAINST US.
HEY, WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT?
SHOULD WE SURPRISE EVERYONE?!
OH.
HOLD ON...

I WAS WITH HIM FROM MORNING TO NIGHT.

HE WAS GOOD AT FINDING FOUR-LEAF CLOVERS.
HERE.
A GOOD-LUCK CHARM.
WHEN HE GAVE ME THAT RING...
I THOUGHT WE WOULD ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.
IT WAS ALL THANKS TO YOUR GOOD-LUCK CHARM.
THAT'S AMAZING, HAYATO!
...I SURPRISINGLY GOT BETTER AT EVERYTHING, EVEN MY STUDIES.

HE'S...
I DIDN'T KNOW WHY.
IT REALLY ANNOYED ME.
...BETTER AT STUDYING AND SPORTS...
...WHEN I'M NOT AROUND.
HE PROBABLY DOESN'T NEED ME.
...ONE DAY...
HE STARTED AVOIDING ME.
...
BUT...
BUT...
OH YEAH, THE GOOD-LUCK CHARM.
IF I GIVE HIM A GOOD-LUCK CHARM MADE BY ME...
...HE MIGHT THINK BETTER OF ME...
...AND THINGS WILL GO BACK TO NORMAL.
HE MIGHT BE MY FRIEND AGAIN.

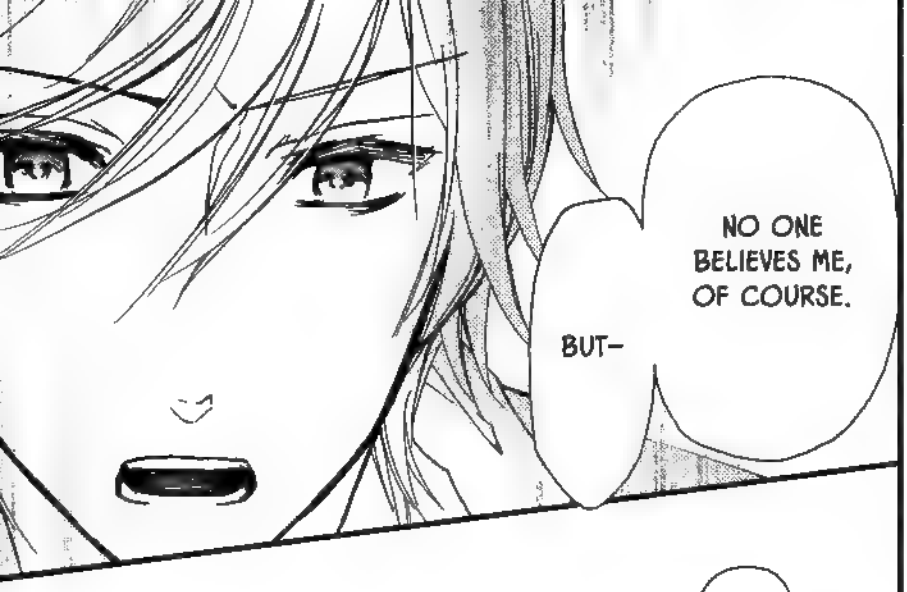
SHALL I GRANT YOUR WISH?
AND AT THAT MO-MENT ...
I CAN'T DO...
...WHAT HE DOES SO EASILY.
WHY CAN'T I FIND ONE?!
WHY?
BA
WHY?
A VOICE FROM THE SHRINE?!

IMP...
REALLY?
...
TELL ME YOUR WISH. I'LL MAKE IT COME TRUE.
JOLT
...I'LL TAKE THAT WHICH YOU CHERISH MOST.
IT'S TRUE
BUT IN RETURN ...
THAT WHICH I CHERISH MOST...
GRIP
...
FINE! GRANT ME MY WISH!
VOOSH
UHH...

...HE'S SURE TO THINK BETTER OF ME.
WITH THIS...
NO ONE AT SCHOOL ...
...AND NO ONE IN TOWN...
BUT THE NEXT DAY...
...HE DISAP-PEARED.

I WAS GOING TO GIVE HIM THIS CHARM!
WHY?! HE WAS HERE!
...COULD REMEMBER HIS NAME OR FACE. IT WAS LIKE HE NEVER EXISTED.
SUDDENLY I COULDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT HIM.
THAT'S WHEN I KNEW...
...I HAD TRADED AWAY MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND.
I'LL TAKE THAT WHICH YOU CHERISH MOST.

I WANTED TO REPAIR OUR RELATIONSHIP, AND INSTEAD I SOLD OFF MY FRIEND.
BUT THIS WHOLE STORY...
...MIGHT ONLY EXIST IN THE DREAM I ALWAYS HAVE.
THE DEAL I MADE AT THAT SHRINE MAY NEVER HAVE TRULY HAPPENED.
SHU
BUT...
I STILL HAVE THE LUCKY CHARM HE MADE FOR ME.
MY FRIEND... EXISTED.


NO ONE BELIEVES ME, OF COURSE.
BUT-

I BELIEVE YOU.
YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIEND STILL EXISTS.

SO...
MOMOCHI...

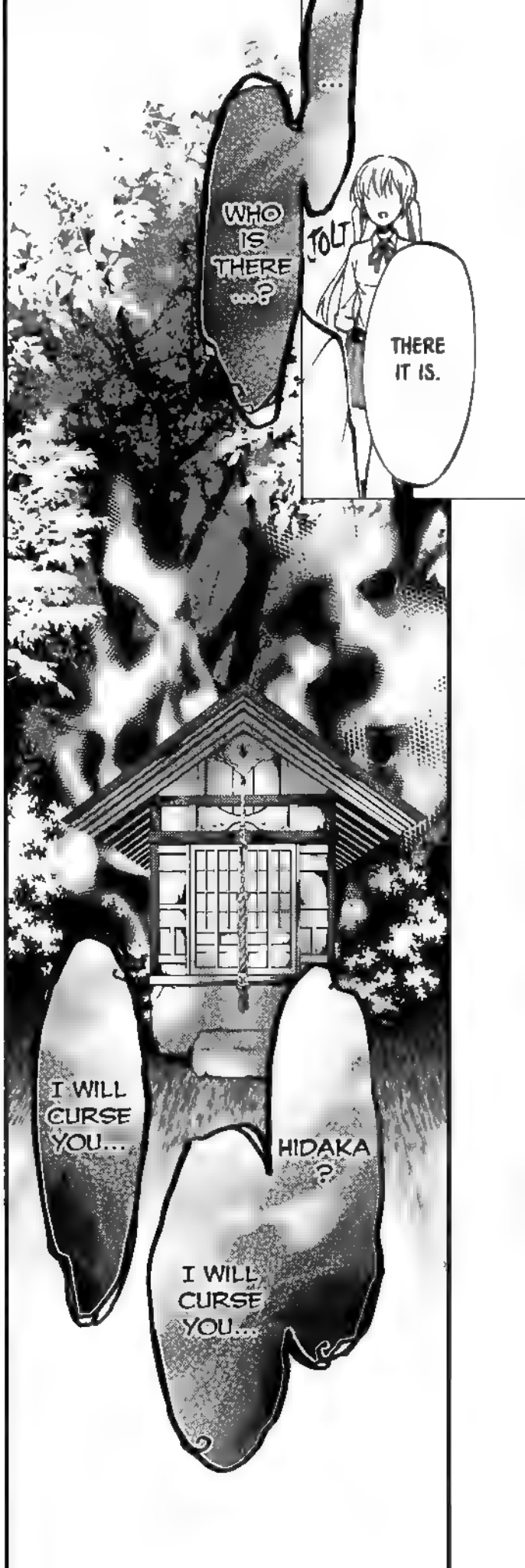
MY FRIEND DISAP-PEARED BECAUSE OF SOMETHING TRIVIAL I WISHED FOR...
I REALLY MADE THAT DEAL.
I THINK MY FRIEND IS CURSING ME.

AOI ISN'T THE ONE WHO CURSED HIM.
LET'S DISPEL THAT CURSE.
...
I THINK I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.
AOI!
...
HIDAKA ...
...HASN'T COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN YOU.

THE DAY I WANDERED INTO MOMOCHI HOUSE...
...WAS COINCIDENTALLY THE SAME DAY HAYATO MADE THAT WISH AT A SHRINE.
HE BELIEVES HE'S THE REASON I VANISHED.
HE MAY THINK I'M THE ONE CURSING HIM...
...BUT IF SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS HAPPENING TO HAYATO...
THE HIDAKA FAMILY ARE AT FAULT FOR NEGLECTING US...
...IT'S PROBABLY THE WORK OF THE HOST OF THAT SHRINE— THE MASKED AYAKASHI.
I GET IT...
"THAT WHICH YOU CHERISH MOST"...
MMBL

LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.
NEVER MIND.
HM?
I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
THE SHRINE IS THIS WAY.
SHIME-NAWA... BARRIER ROPES.
WHEN I TOLD MY MOM I HEARD A VOICE COMING FROM THE SHRINE...
FWIP
...SHE PLACED SHIMENAWA AROUND THIS PLACE AND TOLD ME NOT TO COME HERE AGAIN.

THIS PLACE...
IT'S OLD AND DIRTY, HUH.
YOU WANTED TO DO SOMETHING HERE?
YEAH!
DASH
HIDAKA CAN'T HEAR THOSE VOICES.
I MUST DO THIS!
SHUP
WHO ARE YOU?
I'LL CURSE YOU
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?!


...
WHO IS THERE ...?
TOLT
THERE IT IS.
I WILL CURSE YOU...
HIDAKA ?
I WILL CURSE YOU...

NOW LET'S CLEAN UP THIS SHRINE!
WHAT?!
THAT SHOULD DO IT.
FWSS
WHAT IS THIS? IT SMELLS GOOD... MY POWER...IS DRAINING...
URGH ...
SLAP
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
YOU WANT US TO CLEAN?
I BROUGHT A TON OF CLEANING TOOLS! ♪
KLAFF KLAFF KLAFF
WE NEED TO START SHOWING OUR APPRECIATION.

I HAVE SOME VERMILION PAINT IN MY CLOSET. I USED IT ON TOY MODELS WHEN I WAS YOUNG.
HIDAKA?
WE SHOULD PROBABLY REPAINT IT, RIGHT?
TMP
SQUEEZ
...
I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE US FOR EVERY-THING THAT'S HAPPENED.
WE'LL CLEAN YOU UP TO MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER.
SQUIK SQUIK
WHAT... IS THIS...
YES!
WELL...
DON'T DO ANY MORE BAD THINGS TO HIM.
HIDAKA IS VERY KIND, ISN'T HE?
OUR BROTHER IS STILL ANGRY...
HUH?
TMP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?!

PARDON THE INTRU-SION.
I CAME TO CLEAN THE SHRINE WITH HIDAKA...
BOW
OH
CLEAN THE SHRINE?
YOU MENTIONED YOUR NAME WAS MOMOCHI...
ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE MOMOCHI FAMILY? FROM THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS?
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT US?
YES, I'M HIMARI MOMOCHI.
MY LATE FATHER SPOKE ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.
HE LAMENTED THE FACT THAT THERE WERE NO MEMBERS OF THE MOMOCHI FAMILY TO DISCUSS OUR FOX SPIRIT PROBLEM...
HAYATO DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT IT, BUT...
LONG AGO, MANY PEOPLE IN THE HIDAKA FAMILY WERE BORN WITH MYSTERIOUS POWERS.

THEY WERE KNOWN AS FOX SHAPE-SHIFTERS IN THIS AREA.
AMONG OUR ANCES-TORS...
...THERE WERE A FEW WHO HELPED PEOPLE BY USING THEIR ABILITY TO CONTROL YOKAI KNOWN AS KUDAGITSUNE.
BUT OUR BLOOD-LINE GRADU-ALLY LOST ITS POWERS.
MY FATHER WAS THE LAST HIDAKA WHO COULD SENSE THINGS OF THAT NATURE.
"Kudagitsune, or "pipe foxes," are often used as familiars.
HAYATO AND I NEVER INHERITED SUCH POWERS...
...SO MY FATHER BUILT THIS SMALL SHRINE IN OUR YARD...
...TO END OUR TIES WITH THINGS NOT OF OUR WORLD.
I'VE MOVED THE FOXES THERE.
MAKE SURE YOU PLACE OFFERINGS BEFORE IT EVERY DAY.
I OBEYED MY FATHER'S WISHES EVEN AFTER HIS DEATH.
BUT...
BACK WHEN HE WAS LITTLE, HAYATO SAID HE HAD MADE A DEAL WITH THE SHRINE...
...AND SAID SOMETHING ABOUT A CURSE.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...

LISTEN...
THE MEMBERS OF THE HIDAKA FAMILY PROBABLY DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE KUDAGITSUNE.
SO THAT'S WHY...
EVEN IF SOMEONE WANTS TO END A CONTRACT WITH AN AYAKASHI, IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.
TO FORCE AN UNRULY AYAKASHI TO CALM ITSELF...
...THEY MAY HAVE PLACED UNNECESSARY SEALS AND WARDS...
...MAKING THE AYAKASHI SUFFER IN A SMALL CAGE.

AYAKASHI DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S CONVENIENT FOR HUMANS.
I DON'T SEEM TO HAVE SPECIAL POWERS MYSELF...
...BUT THAT'S WHAT A FAMILY MEMBER TOLD ME.
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE CLEANING THE SHRINE?
WHAT PURPOSE DOES THAT SERVE?
WELL, THIS IS IN PREPARATION...
I WANT TO TAKE STEPS TOWARDS TALKING TO THE HOSTS OF THIS SHRINE ONCE WE'RE DONE CLEANING IT.
STEPS?
UMM... FOR EXAMPLE, PLACING THESE SHIMENAWA HERE HAS HAD THE OPPOSITE EFFECT.
OH
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
THEN IF I HADN'T PLACED THESE...
WAIT! NOT YET.
GRAB
KRAK

ARRGH...
!
OH NO! I'M STILL NOT READY...
KRAK
THEY'VE BEEN RELEASED!

FLU
FF
Y

KUDAGITSUNE BRING GOOD FORTUNE TO ANY FAMILY WHO LETS THEM INTO THEIR HOUSE.
BUT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO GROW IN NUMBER.
I HAD NO IDEA THERE WOULD BE SO MANY...
A HUMAN WHO COULD SENSE AYAKASHI MUST HAVE TRAPPED THEM IN THE SHRINE, BUT THEY MULTIPLIED IN THERE.
I DON'T KNOW. THE SHRINE SUDDENLY BURST OPEN AND THERE WAS A POWERFUL GUST OF WIND...
DASH
WHAT'S HAPPENED?

I'M SORRY FOR DISTURBING YOU!
KUDA-GITSUNE!
BUT YOU CAN'T STAY HERE ANY-MORE.
GRWL
THE HIDAKA...
HOW DARE YOU TRAP US IN THERE!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WHAT KUDA-GITSUNE?
NO ONE HERE CAN SEE YOU ANYMORE.
PLEASE UNDER-STAND...
MOMO-CHI...
CAN SHE SEE SOME-THING?
COME WITH ME!
MR
MR
...
I SEE. YOU'RE A MOMOCHI...

YES.

YOUR BROTHER
?
F
W
O
O
M

OUR BROTHER...
...SAID HE FOUND A TASTY-LOOKING HUMAN THAT HE WILL DEVOUR TO BECOME A GREAT DEMON.
HE SAID HE'LL TEACH THE MOMOCHI A LESSON.
!

SWEEP
THEIR BROTHER IS PROBABLY THAT MASKED AYAKASHI.
TMP. TMP.
HIDAKA...
YOU COULD'VE STAYED BEHIND.
MOMOCHI HOUSE...
...IS UP AHEAD.
WHY?
SWEEP

UP AHEAD...
...IS THE ONE HE'S BEEN LOOKING FOR...
HIDAKA...
FWSSSH
I FOUND YOU.
WHY WOULD YOU THINK I'D LET YOU GO ALONE?
I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE ANY MORE FRIENDS.

I WON'T LET YOU RETURN HOME!

HE WAS WAITING FOR US.
THE MASKED AYAKASHI IS HERE, ISN'T HE?
OH? THE HIDAKA KID IS HERE TOO. HOW PERFECT.
BEHOLD MY TERROR...
HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH

I WANT TO GO HOME, BUT I CAN'T.

Chapter 13 End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

CHAPTER 14

Sunset Fox: Part 2

I THINK WE LOST HIM.
BUT WE'RE FARTHER AWAY FROM MY HOUSE.
IS HE STILL FOLLOWING US?
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HE'S WAITING BEHIND US ON THE PATH TO MOMOCHI HOUSE. WE CAN'T TURN BACK.
ONCE THE SUN SETS, WE MIGHT GET LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS.

HEY, ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER...
YES, I THINK SO.
YOU THINK WE CAN DEAL WITH HIM WHEN WE REACH MOMOCHI HOUSE?
WE NEED TO FIND ANOTHER PATH QUICKLY!
THE DEAL I MADE WITH THAT KUDAGITSUNE AT THE SHINE...
...HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND DISAPPEARING?
YEAH.
I CAN'T GIVE YOU THE DETAILS YET, THOUGH.
FWSSH

MOMO-CHI!
HE'S HERE! RUN!
I FOUND YOU.
THE TASTY-LOOKING HUMAN.
DON'T YOU RUN AWAY, GIRL.
I'M GONNA DEVOUR YOU AND BECOME A GREAT DEMON.
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
HE'LL CATCH ME!
?!

HIDAKA!
YOU'RE THERE, AREN'T YOU, MY KUDAGITSUNE?
I CAN'T SEE OR HEAR YOU.
SUFF
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT.
BUT...
I'M REALLY SORRY!

I COULDN'T SEE YOU, BUT YOU WANTED ME TO KNOW YOU EXISTED.
SO YOU TRIED TO GRANT MY WISH, RIGHT?
BUT...
...I THOUGHT YOU TOOK MY FRIEND BECAUSE OF THAT DEAL...
...AND I DESPISED YOU FOR IT.
JUST AS I DESPISED EVERYONE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE ME.
SO YOU SPREAD THAT CURSE...
...IN MY PLACE.

I'LL SHOW YOU MY POWER!
I'M YOUR FAITHFUL KUDAGITSUNE.
YOU NEED ME!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.
I WANTED TO PROVE MYSELF TO MY FRIEND.
I WANTED HIM TO NEED ME.
I DIDN'T WANT TO BE APART FROM HIM.
...

LOOK OUT, HIDAKA!
...
IT... DIDN'T WORK, HUH?
YOU ACCURSED HUMAN!
ACCURSED HUMAN..
...WHO NEVER SEES OR HEARS ME...
YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND MY ANGER!
SHE
I HAVE TO STOP HIM BEFORE THIS GETS WORSE.

FWA SH
CLOSE YOUR EYES, HIDAKA!
!
GRR!
A CHILDISH PRANK!
NOW'S OUR CHANCE! HURRY!
WE'RE SO CLOSE...
THERE!
DON'T THINK YOU CAN ESCAPE ME
...?!
VISH
BA

YOU'VE ENTERED MY DIVINE REALM.

YOU'VE ENTERED MY DIVINE REALM.

THUD

KR

GYAAAH

YOU'RE JUST A YOUNG LITTLE FOX.

FWIK

E

K

K

...CALMED YOU DOWN.

THAT SHOULD HAVE...

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

EH...

"WHO THE HELL"?

YOU SHALL LEARN YOUR PLACE.

I AM THE MASTER OF MOMOCHI HOUSE. HOW DARE YOU ADDRESS ME THAT WAY.

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
EH...
"WHO THE HELL"?
I AM THE MASTER OF MOMOCHI HOUSE. HOW DARE YOU ADDRESS ME THAT WAY.
YOU SHALL LEARN YOUR PLACE.

BUFF
KR
GYAAAH
E
K
K
FWIK
YOU'RE JUST A YOUNG LITTLE FOX.
...CALMED YOU DOWN.
THAT SHOULD HAVE...

...IN MOMOCHI HOUSE.
YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS ARE WELCOME TO RESIDE HERE...
HE DID IT!

THAT'S HIM!

OH

HUH?!

CAN HE SEE AOI INSIDE THE GROUNDS OF MOMOCHI HOUSE?

WHAT IS HE DOING IN THIS PLACE?

HIDAKA ...?

...

SUFF

THAT FOX HAS AOI'S FACE!

I REMEMBER NOW.
MY FRIEND'S NAME IS...
FWAA

...AOI.

HE VANISHED-

SOOF

THAT WAS MERELY A RECOLLECTION.
NOW THOSE RECOL-LECTIONS HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO YOU...
...AND YOU'VE RECOVERED YOUR MEMORY.
THAT KUDAGITSUNE DIDN'T STEAL YOUR FRIEND IN RETURN FOR GRANTING YOUR WISH...
...RATHER HE TOOK YOUR MIND'S IMAGE OF HIM.
THAT YOUNG FOX NEVER HAD THE POWER TO ABDUCT ANYONE.
SO...

...IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT THAT YOUR FRIEND DISAPPEARED.
THEN WHY?
WHY DID AOI DISAPPEAR?
HE EXISTED, BUT THERE'S NO TRACE OF HIM!
DO YOU KNOW WHY?!
...
TMP
TMP
TMP

HE NO LONGER LIVES IN THE HUMAN WORLD.
YOU'RE SAYING ...
...I'LL NEVER MEET HIM AGAIN?
THEN...
...I'LL GO SEE HIM.

YOU CAN HELP ME MEET HIM, CAN'T YOU?
LISTEN.
THIS TIME...
...I'LL TRADE AWAY ANYTHING, EVEN MY SOUL...
THIS HEAVY BURDEN OF GRIEF...
PLEASE GRANT ME MY WISH!
TAKE ME OVER TO YOUR SIDE...
I HATE THIS.
PLEASE!

TMP
THAT IS SOMETHING I CANNOT DO.

THUD
SUF
TMP
HIDAKA?
FOOSH
HE'LL BE FINE NOW.
VEEN

YOU'VE REALLY...
...GROWN SO BIG, HAYATO.

GOOD MORNING!
KLAK
YOU AGAIN, HUH.
DON'T BE LIKE THAT.
CALL ME HIMARI.
LET'S WALK TO SCHOOL TOGETHER.
THEN...

POFF
!
THANK YOU...
...FOR YESTERDAY, HIMARI.
I...
I ONLY DID A BIT OF CLEANING... I DIDN'T DO ALL THAT MUCH.
BUT YOU, HIDAKA...
MY KUDAGITSUNE PROBLEM WAS SOLVED THANKS TO YOU.
YOU CAN CALL ME HAYATO.
OH, OKAY. HAYATO...
HE SEEMS...

...SO MUCH MORE RELAXED NOW.
ANYWAY, I'M GLAD.
NOW YOU WON'T HAVE THAT FOX CURSE TO WORRY ABOUT.
AND YOU WON'T BE TORMENTED BY BAD MEMORIES ABOUT THAT LUCKY CHARM.
ARE YOU REFERRING TO THAT BIG CHARM BAG YOU CARRIED WITH YOU?
NO, NOT THAT.
Though, that was pretty useful.
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE GOOD-LUCK CHARM YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIEND AOI GAVE YOU.
HUH?

MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND? WHO DO YOU MEAN?

IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

BUT ONCE THOSE MEMORIES WERE RETURNED...

...SO HAYATO ALWAYS FELT LIKE HE WAS MISSING SOMETHING.

THAT MASKED FOX SPIRIT STOLE HAYATO'S RECOLLECTION OF AOI...

THIS TIME, HE'LL FORGET EVERYTHING.

Chapter 14/End

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

A Treasure Trove of Surprises?!
CHAPTER 15

WHAT'S ALL THIS NOISE?
THUD
BAM
THUD-THUD
KRASH
BAM
THUD
THUD
AAAH!
VISH
I WANTED TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH HIM...
YUKARI, IT'S THE LITTLE FOX...
TMP TMP
TMP TMP TMP
YOU DON'T SOUND FINE...
I-I'M FINE...
AOI, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
KICK

GR
AB
CATCH!
?!
NOW!
GRWL
I WON'T LISTEN TO WHAT YOU SAY.
HOW DARE YOU RUN AMOK IN OUR HOUSE.
KLUP
OH
ISE!
I'LL CURSE YOU.
THE KUDAGITSUNE BROTHERS LEFT THE HIDACHIS AND NOW RESIDE IN MOMOCHI HOUSE
THEY'VE SETTLED IN PEACEFULLY. BUT THE ELDEST

THAT'S SCARY, HUH.
I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE SO CUTE.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
I'M NOT TELLING!
THEN CAN I CALL YOU KON?
I'LL CURSE YOU!
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING. YOU'RE GOING TO FIND OUT MY NAME...
...AND MAKE ME ONE OF YOUR SHIKIGAMI LIKE THESE GUYS.
I'LL CURSE YOU!
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
AOI WOULD NEVER DO THAT.
THAT'S RIGHT. DON'T WORRY.
I WON'T TRUST ANYONE WHO TRICKS PEOPLE!
WHAT?!

I HAVEN'T TRICKED ANYONE.
KEEP LYING WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
PUFF PUFF
Why me?
I'M GOING TO DEVOUR THAT TASTY-LOOKING HUMAN AND BECOME A GREAT DEMON...
...AND GET MY REVENGE ON YOU!
YOU'RE STILL SAYING THAT...
OH
I HEARD SOMEONE ELSE SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
If you devour someone strong, you'll become strong too!
DID THAT HIDEOUS DEMON TURN THIS CUTE FOX AGAINST US?!
GASP
DON'T BELIEVE HIM, KON.
KASHA IS A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING.

KASHA ?!
!
I-I KNEW YOU TURNED KON AGAINST US!
I HAVEN'T THE TIME TO CONCERN MYSELF WITH A LITTLE FOX.
TAP TAP
WHO ARE YOU CALLING A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING?

THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE?
HERE, AOI, I HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU.
?!
A BOX?!
I WAS HAVING TROUBLE EMPTYING IT. THIS IS PERFECT FOR YOU.
WHO'D ACCEPT A GIFT FROM YOU? GET IT OUT OF HERE!

LET'S PUT SOME STRONG SEALS ON THIS AND PLACE IT DEEP IN THE STOREHOUSE.
...ANYTHING HE LEAVES BEHIND CAN'T BE GOOD.
AT ANY RATE...
KASHA !
...SO STUBBORN. HEH HEH...
YOU'RE STILL...
WHOA! ISE!
I DON'T HEAR ANY-THING.
SHOOP
SHOOP
SHOOP
LET ME CHECK.
HE MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT EMPTYING IT. IS THERE SOMETHING INSIDE?
WEEN
WHY AM I THE EXAM-PLE?
IF YOU OPEN IT, YOU MIGHT TURN INTO AN OLD MAN LIKE IN THAT FOLKTALE.
SPEAKING OF BOXES...

PEEK
A TREASURE BOX...
IT'S MINE NOW!
HUH?!
NO, THAT'S...
SHUP
WE NEED TO SEAL THIS...
!
I'VE HEARD ALL I NEED TO KNOW! THE GREAT DEMON KASHA LEFT THIS BOX BEHIND!
IF I OPEN IT, I'M SURE TO BECOME POWERFUL TOO!
WHAT?
THE NEXT TIME WE MEET, I'LL REVEAL YOUR TRUE IDENTITY!
My true identity?

DASH
REMEMBER WHAT I SAID!
HE'S SUCH A SORE LOSER...
THAT BOX IS DANGEROUS. WE NEED TO GO AFTER HIM!
HEY! COME ON OUT.
IT'S NO USE RUNNING AWAY!
YOU'RE GOING TO SCARE HIM, ISE.
COME ON OUT!
COME OUT!
IS HE FARTHER BACK IN THE HOUSE?
LET'S GO LOOK.
SHUK
SHUK

GRWL
GNAW
GNAW
WHAT'S WITH THIS BOX? IT WON'T OPEN.
KON?
ARE YOU THERE, KON?
JOLT
KLATT
THERE!
...AND THEY WERE TOO TIMID TO HIDE ANYWHERE FAR AWAY...
WHEN I WAS AT THE ORPHANAGE, I PLAYED WITH THE YOUNGER KIDS OFTEN...
HEY, COME ON OUT.
SMP

I WON'T TELL AOI WHERE YOU ARE.
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT AOI IS FOOLING PEOPLE...
...KON?
MY NAME ISN'T KON!
AH!
MRR

THEN TELL ME YOUR NAME.
SMILE
WHY WOULD I TELL YOU?
IT'S TAMAMO.
BLAB
!

MY NAME IS HIMARI-HIMARI MOMOCHI.
NICE TO MEET YOU, TAMAMO!
WAIT. I DIDN'T MEAN TO TELL YOU MY NAME.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO, BUT...
TAMAMO!
THAT'S A REALLY CUTE NAME!
MRFF
MRFF
HUH?
OH!
WHY DID I SAY MY NAME?
WHAT?!
BUT I THINK YOUR NAME IS REALLY COOL.
HUH?
BLAB
BLAB
BLAB
BUT I HATE AOI...
EVERYONE WHO LIVES HERE IS NICE, SO I DON'T HATE THEM.
HUH?
BLAB
HALT
...BECAUSE HE TRICKED ME!
WHAT'S GOING ON?

A BLUE LIGHT?
Glow
W-WELL...
WHY DO YOU HATE AOI?
WHY CAN'T I STOP MYSELF FROM TALKING?!
DASH
WAIT!
TOSS
I JUST HATE HIM!
I SEE...
TAMAMO?

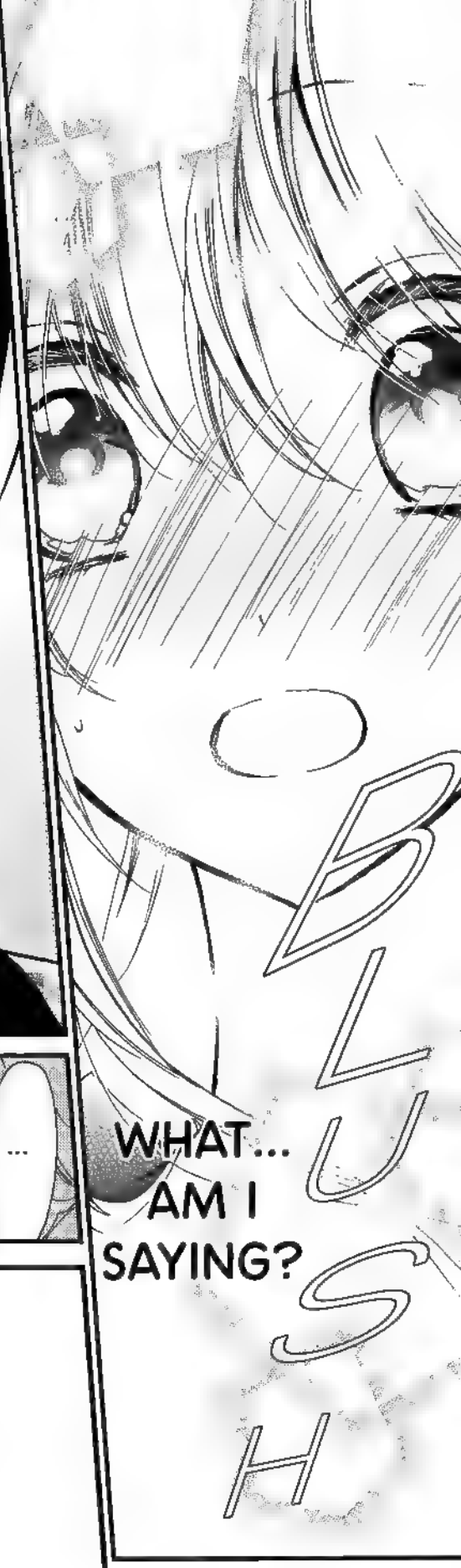
I DIDN'T INTEND TO DECEIVE HIM...
IS THAT HOW HE SEES ME?
HM? WHAT IS IT, HIMARI?
AOI...
AOI!
IT SEEMS HE REALLY DISLIKES ME.
SORRY, I OVERHEARD YOU.
...KNOWING THAT HAYATO WILL NEVER REMEMBER YOU?
ARE YOU REALLY ALL RIGHT...

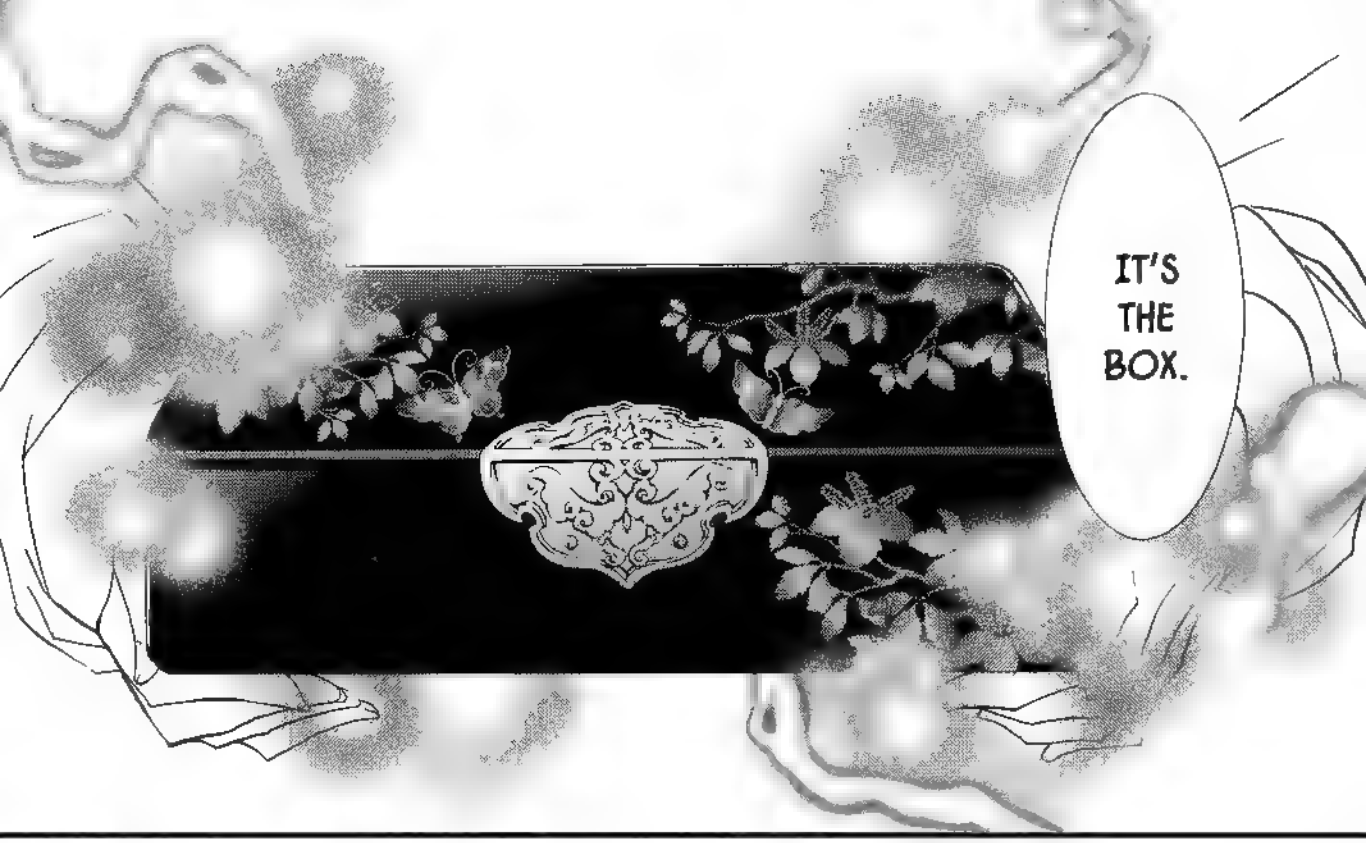
WHAT...?
HUH?!
OOPS.
WHY DID I SAY THAT JUST NOW?
AH
AH
I DIDN'T WANT TO PRY...
HMM...
I DIDN'T MEAN TO ASK THAT.
AOI...
UM... NO... IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
I...
...
I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE, BUT...
THEN WHY DID YOU ASK?

I...
BECAUSE ...
...I LOVE YOU.

UM...
OH, I...
AH
AH
...

AH.
I SEE.

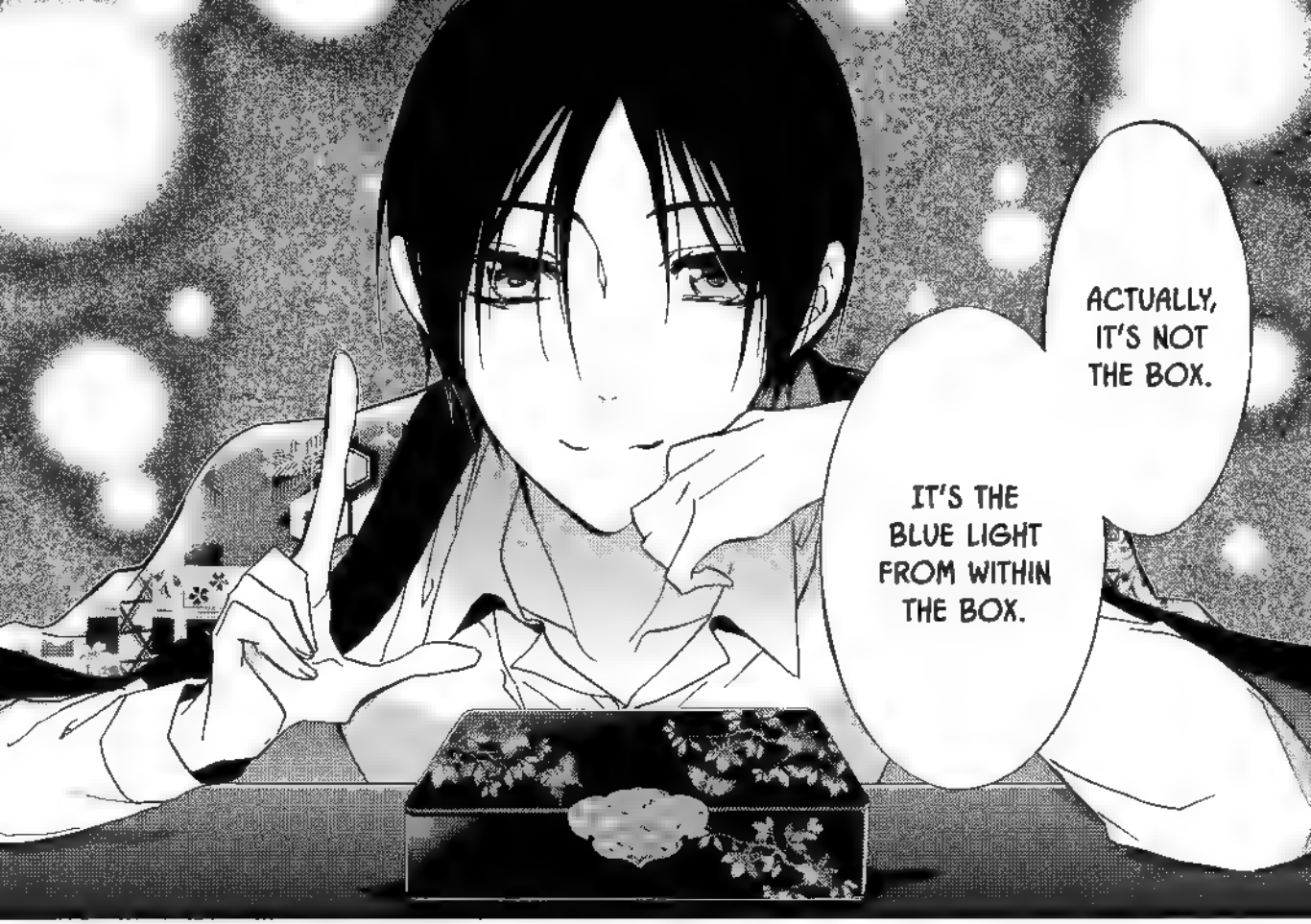

WHAT... AM I SAYING?


IT'S THE BOX.

AAGH! WHAT AM I SAYING?!
I HOPE WE HAVE RICE CAKES AT SNACK TIME! ♪
BLAB
...HAS THE POWER TO MAKE PEOPLE REVEAL THEIR SECRETS.
SEE? IT LOOKS LIKE THIS BOX...

LET ME BORROW IT FOR A SECOND.
WHAT?!
HEY!

I WANT TO HAVE MORE THINGS TO DO WHEN I'M HUMAN.
HERE!
BLAB
BLAB
TAKE THIS!
POOF
BLAB
HERE!
TODAY...I DID A BAD JOB OF PUTTING ON MAKEUP...


ACTUALLY, IT'S NOT THE BOX.
IT'S THE BLUE LIGHT FROM WITHIN THE BOX.

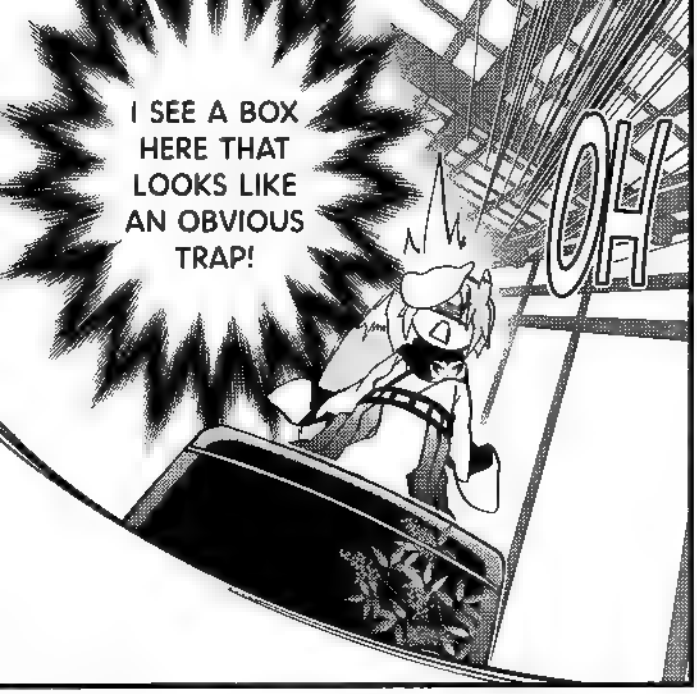
AH!
WELL, UM, THAT WAS...
OH, ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID...
BLUSH
AND WHY I SAID...

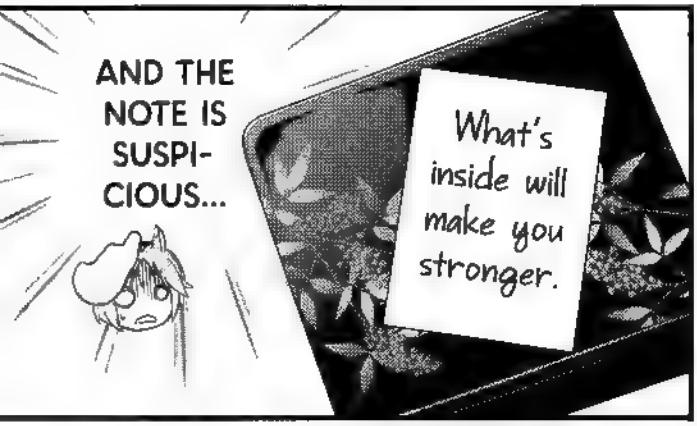
!
SO THAT'S WHY TAMAMO SUDDENLY TOLD ME HIS NAME!

N...
LIKE FAMILY, HUH? THAT'S TRUE.
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
NOW THAT WE'RE LIVING TOGETHER, YOU'RE LIKE FAMILY...

...
IF I USE THIS BOX...?
OH...
YOU COULD USE THAT BOX TO PROVE TO TAMAMO...
...THAT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN DECEIVING HIM.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
IN THAT CASE, LET'S GET THINGS READY!
I'LL CALL YUKARI AND ISE.
OKAY.
TMP TMP TMP TMP

...
I SEE...
SHE THINKS OF ME AS FAMILY...
AHHH
I...
...GUESS THAT'S... FOR THE BEST...
YEAH ...


I SEE A BOX HERE THAT LOOKS LIKE AN OBVIOUS TRAP!
OH!


AND THE NOTE IS SUSPI-CIOUS...
What's inside will make you stronger.

FO
OMP
HEY!
SNIFF
BUT IT SMELLS NICE...

GLOOM
SHUCKS.
GLOOM
I DROPPED THE BOX.
I SHOULD CURSE THEM..
GRRWWL

WHOA... BROTHERS...
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
BROTHER, LET'S GO!
TO OUR WELCOMING PARTY!

HE'S HERE. COME ON OVER, TAMAMO!
UHH...

PEER
NO ONE WILL DECEIVE YOU.
LOOK.
POKE
UHH...
BUT AOI'S HERE, RIGHT?
UHH...
POK
THEY'RE YUKARI'S SPECIAL INARIZUSHI! ♪ IF YOU EAT THEM, YOU'LL GROW BIG AND STRONG!
WE WEREN'T TRYING TO FOOL YOU.
Open it
HISS
IS THIS ANOTHER TRICK?!
WHY DID YOU LEAVE THAT SUSPICIOUS-LOOKING BOX AND SEND MY BROTHERS FOR ME?

I HAVE NO SECRETS NOW, YOUNG FOX.

THIS BOX IS FILLED WITH AYAKASHI FIREFLIES THAT DEVOUR SECRETS.

THE NUE...

AOI IS...

HUH?

AOI IS...
HUH?
THE NUE...

THIS BOX IS FILLED WITH AYAKASHI FIREFLIES THAT DEVOUR SECRETS.
I HAVE NO SECRETS NOW, YOUNG FOX.

I THOUGHT WE SHOULD DISCUSS THINGS LIKE MEN.
PANIC
PANIC
SNFF
ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY, YOUNG FOX?
SO THAT'S WHY I SAID MY NAME...
FIREFLIES THAT DEVOUR SECRETS?
I WON'T RUN AWAY!
...THE ELDEST OF MY BROTHERS! SOMEDAY I'LL BECOME A NINE-TAILED FOX AYAKASHI!
I'M...
SIGH
WHAT?
YOU ACCUSE OTHERS OF TREACHERY, AND YET YOU'RE FULL OF SECRETS. HOW PETTY.
THEN TELL ME HOW I DECEIVED YOU!

I AM THE MASTER OF MOMOCHI HOUSE. MY NAME IS KNOWN IN OVER THREE THOUSAND WORLDS!
I WON'T LET YOU CRITICIZE ME WITHOUT REASON.
NOW TELL ME!
UHH...
UHH...
NUE?! IF YOU SCARE HIM, IT'LL HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT.
...
Glow
UHH...
Glow
TH-THEY'RE GOING TO EAT ME!
AAAH!
Glow
Glow

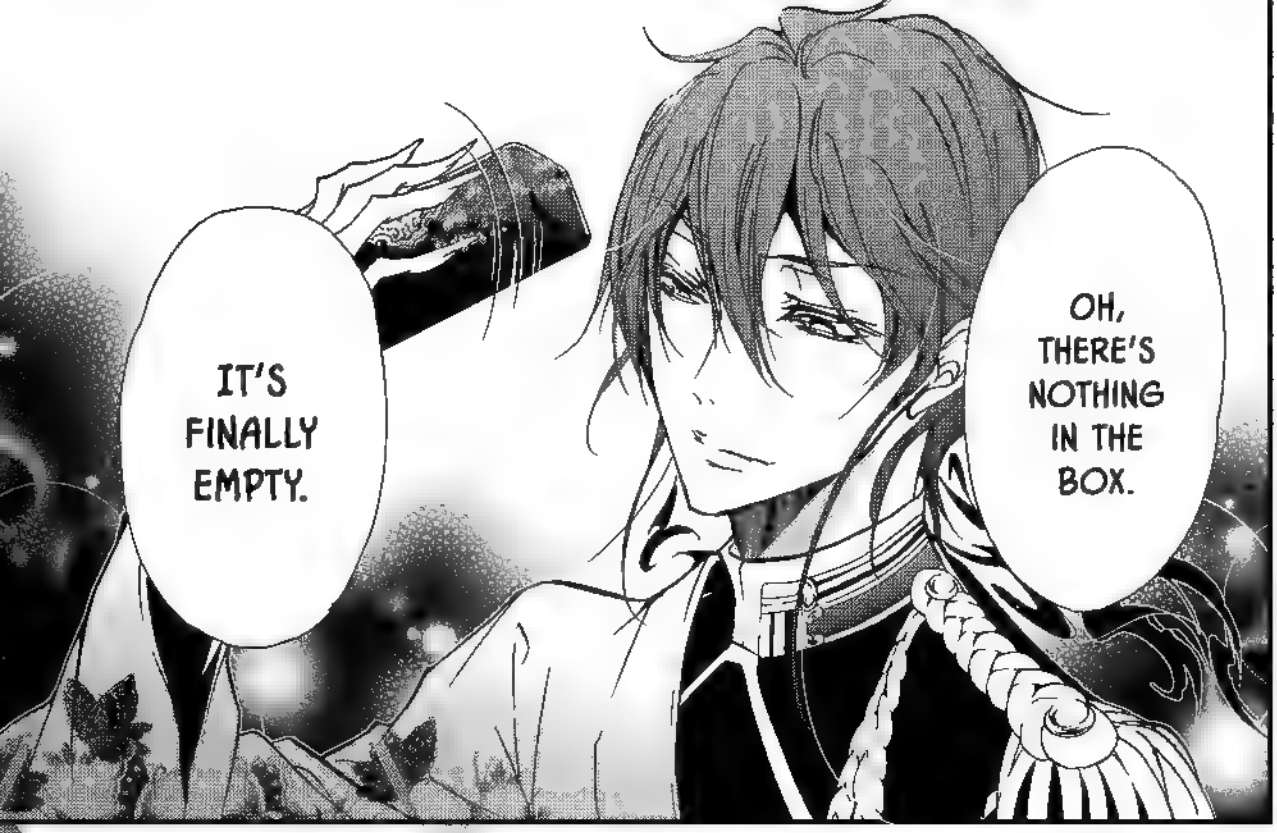
HE LOOKED LIKE MY MOTHER.
UGH, I CAN'T STOP TALKING...
BECAUSE...
WHEN I FIRST SAW THE NUE...
...I-I THOUGHT HE WAS BEAUTIFUL...

BUSH
HYOOOO
WHAT?!

SO...
YOU THOUGHT THE NUE WAS YOUR MOTHER WHEN YOU FIRST SAW HIM...
...AND YOU FELT DECEIVED WHEN YOU FOUND OUT HE WAS A MAN?
NOD
NOD
I'LL CURSE HIM!
DON'T CRY AND EAT AT THE SAME TIME.
MNCHMNCH

This is problematic...
AOI.
I FEEL LIKE IT'S PARTLY THE NUE'S FAULT SINCE HE HAS THE TAIL OF A FOX...
IT'S REALLY EASY TO TELL WITH MY CHEST IN PLAIN SIGHT!
I think you've been taken in by his cuteness!
WHEN YOU APPEARED AS THE NUE, I WAS SURPRISED, BUT YOU KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN, RIGHT?
HUH?
...
I...
SWFF
FWA
AOI...

...DOESN'T WANT TO HOLD THE BOX.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
...
KASHA!
DON'T CAUSE ANY MORE PROBLEMS FOR US!
SURE, FINE...



IT WASN'T THAT HE COULDN'T OPEN IT...

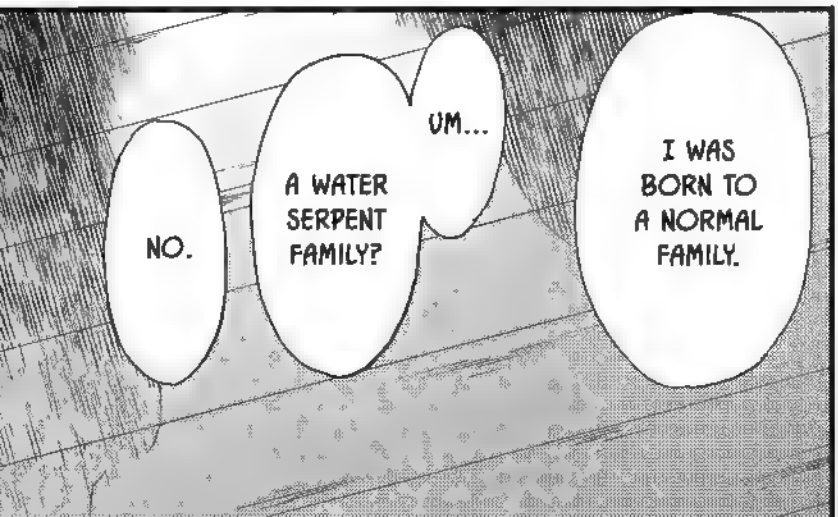
THIS WILL MAKE A GOOD PILLOW.
A..
...PILLOW?!
What a trouble-maker!
OH?
HE'S FALLEN ASLEEP.
ZZZZZ

HE YEARNS FOR A MOTHER BECAUSE HE'S NEVER HAD ONE.
KUDAGITSUNE MULTIPLY FOR NO REASON.
THAT'S NOT TRUE IN THIS CASE.
KIDS WHO STILL DEPEND ON THEIR PARENTS ARE SUCH A HANDFUL.
AFTER MAKING A FUSS, GETTING ROWDY AND EATING ALL THAT FOOD, HE GOES TO SLEEP ON YOUR LAP?
I WAS NEVER THAT SPOILED.
HEH
HE REMINDS ME OF WHEN AOI WAS LITTLE...
YOUR MOM IS PRETTY SCARY, HUH.
JUST THINKING ABOUT MINE GIVES ME THE CHILLS...
WHO'D YEARN FOR A MOTHER?!

MY PARENTS ARE BOTH REALLY GOOD-LOOKING.
I HAVE AN ADORABLE YOUNGER SISTER.
I SEE...
SOME AYAKASHI HAVE PARENTS TOO.
HIMARI...
EVERYONE IS HERE...
JUST LIKE HUMANS.

...LIVING IN MOMOCHI HOUSE, THE HOME MY PARENTS LEFT ME...

I WOULDN'T SAY THAT...
...TO BECOME SUCH A MASTER HOUSEKEEPER.
YOU MUST HAVE HAD A STRICT UPBRING-ING...


NO.
A WATER SERPENT FAMILY?
UM...
I WAS BORN TO A NORMAL FAMILY.
BY THE WAY, YUKARI...

Chapter 15/End

Momochi has reached volume 4. I've wanted to write the Hidaka storyline since the very start. I'm thrilled that I've finally done it. Whenever I see the sunset, I remember my childhood. I'm more likely to see the sunrise, though...

Aya Shouto

The DEMON PRINCE of MOMOCHI HOUSE

In summer when the sun is bright, I like how white fabric almost looks light purple in the shade. I think the two characters on the cover would look good in the rain, but I chose to depict them on an early summer afternoon.

-Aya Shouoto

Aya Shouoto was born on December 25. Her hobbies are traveling, staying at hotels, sewing and daydreaming. She currently lives in Tokyo and enjoys listening to J-pop anime theme songs while she works.

The Demon Prince of Momochi House

Volume 4
Shojo Beat Edition

Story and Art by Aya Shouoto

Translation JN Productions
Touch-Up Art & Lettering Inori Fukuda Trant
Design Fawn Lau
Editor Nancy Thistlethwaite

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THE DEMON PRINCE OF MOMOCHI HOUSE is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up.
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